

THOMASTOWN PARISH NEWSLETTER

26th April 2020

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CHURCH SERVICES THESE WEEKS,

Here in Thomastown: Mass will be celebrated on 108fm at 6pm on Saturday and 10am on Sunday.

As we continue with the restrictions due to the coronavirus,

30 minutes prayer will be held on Monday at midday on 108fm

The Rosary will be prayed on Wednesday at midday on 108fm

30 minutes prayer will be held on Friday at midday on 108fm.

Please share this information with friends and family.

Deaths / Anniversaries: Mattie Lawlor, Maudlin St. (6pm); **Helen Shanahan**, Nore View Crescent; **Joseph O'Reilly**, Ladywell. May they rest in peace.

Mass Intentions next weekend: Jim Kearney, Oldtown (10am Mass).

The Parish Office is not staffed on a regular basis these days. Best contact the Office, in this era of social distancing, by telephone – leave your name and number and we will get back to you – email, post, or leave a note into the Office letterbox.

Thank you for contributions to the weekly envelope collection, which goes to support the Parish projects, to the Easter Collection, which is for the support of the priests, and to the Trocaire collection. Your support is always appreciated and needed. Please leave your contributions into the Parish Office. You may find it more convenient if you set up an account transfer using the following information: Account name: Thomastown Church Parochial Current Account. BIC: BOFIE2D. IBAN: IE39 BOFI 9060 9911 7117 80. For Easter Offerings use the following information: Account name: Thomastown Church Parochial Clergy Fund Account. BIC: BOFIE2D. IBAN: IE50 BOFI 9060 9932 7313 85. Please include your name under 'narrative' or 'reference', and we will assign address for our records.

Accord establishes support phone line to help relationships during COVID 19: To help support marriage and relationships in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, Accord has established a new relationship support phone line which will be staffed by experienced couples and relationships counsellors. This will be a free service, but calls are charged at a local rate. Accord's specialist in counselling (marriage and relationships), Mary Johnston said, "Accord is very conscious of those experiencing difficulties in their relationships and family lives as we are confined to home during this unprecedented period for all in society. The circumstances in which we are living now can increase stress and pressure on relationships and in families. The support line is open from 9.00am – 8.00pm Monday to Friday and will be contacted at 015313331.

Pope Francis gave an interview to English writer Austin Ivereigh during Lent. Ivereigh quotes the Pope: "I'm thinking at this time of the saints who live next door. They are the heroes: doctors, volunteers, religious sisters, priests, shop workers – all performing their duty so that society can continue functioning. How many doctors and nurses have died! All serving The Lord does not leave his miracles half-finished. If we become aware of this miracle of the next-door saints, if we can follow their tracks, the miracle will end well, for the good of all. God doesn't leave things halfway". Think of the saints next door whom you know, name them, pray for them and thank God for them.

Confirmation: the Taoiseach has said that Covid 19 restrictions are extended until Tuesday 5th May, and that schools will remain closed until further notice. Regarding the Sacraments of Confirmation – which was to be conferred in Thomastown this Sunday, 26th April – we think kindly and prayerfully of the young people who would have presented themselves for Confirmation this weekend. As to when Confirmation will take place for this year's batch of young people, the only thing we know is that we don't know. We must await directions from the Dept. of Education and Bishop Farrell. This situation is disappointing for families because these occasions are times when the wider family comes together. Every parish is in the same situation.

At the Confirmation Ceremony the Bishop says a beautiful prayer invoking the Holy Spirit on the people presenting themselves for the Sacrament – "Send your Holy Spirit upon them to be their helper and guide. Give them the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Right Judgement and Courage, the Spirit of Knowledge and Reverence. Fill them with the Spirit of Wonder and Awe in your presence. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The gift of Wisdom helps us to look at things from God's point of view. When we look at things from God's point of view it is easier to make the right decisions about how to treat others and how best to live our lives.

The gift of Understanding asks us to look at the world we live in through eyes of faith. This will encourage us to create a just world, where all are treated fairly and equally.

The gift of Right Judgement asks us to be open to other gifts of the Spirit, wisdom, knowledge and understanding, so that we may always act in a way that will make the world a better place. ~

The gift of Courage helps us to accept the challenge of being a person of faith – it is not an easy choice to make. We must be brave in the service of God, dare to stand out from the crowd, be proud to be a child of God.

The gift of Knowledge lets us see God in everything – the people around us and the world in which we live. This will cause us to think and act differently.

The gift of Reverence asks us to honour, respect and give thanks and praise to God. If we do this then we will also honour and respect all people because they are created in the image and likeness of God.

The gifts of Wonder and Awe in God's Presence are gifts that help us to be aware of the greatness of God. They encourage us to take time to reflect on the glory of God, which can be seen all around us and in each one of us. They remind us in a special way to take care of the environment and to work to keep it safe from destruction.

A little homework, better still reflection for each of us..... Can you recognise any of the above in the people close to you? Affirm them by telling them. Is there a gift that you would like to receive and grow for the times in which we live? Ask the Lord for it, and we will support you in the prayer too.

The vision of **Towards Peace** is to provide a safe supportive space where people who have been affected by abuse in a Church context can be accompanied as they seek their own experience of spiritual peace one step at a time. **Towards Peace** provides a spiritual direction service. Up to nine sessions with a specially trained spiritual companion can be made available; there is no fee. **Spiritual direction** offers a safe space to attend to your own spiritual life and sense of the Sacred. It is an ancient practice in many religious traditions. Within the Christian tradition, spiritual direction offers a way to tune into the presence of God's love within your own life. Phone 01 5053028; email towardspeace@iecon.ie web www.towardspeace.ie